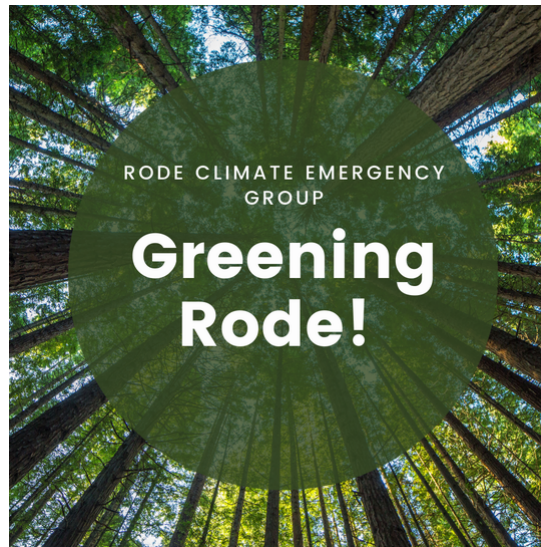


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Rode, Beckington & Norton St Philip Climate Emergency Group

Welcome to the first Climate Emergency Group email

Happy New Year!

One of the Group's objectives for 2023 is to improve communication, and there are, of course, many ways in which we can do this. We already make occasional posts on the various village Facebook sites...the Rode group has an Instagram account (albeit currently with only a few followers)...we write articles for the parish magazines....and during 2022 we produced and distributed some hard copy literature (the Rode village Climate Change Survey, material for Rode Village Day and the Big Green Weekend).

But in 2023 we have the opportunity to improve communication in a number of ways. Firstly, Rode will have an improved village website with the potential for its own Climate Emergency section (it's hoped this can go live in the spring). Norton St Philip PC has a new website which could potentially also have a dedicated Climate Emergency section. Secondly, we have discussed the potential to produce hard-copy quarterly newsletters for distribution in Rode, Beckington, Norton St Philip and other local villages. And thirdly, email newsletters (such as this) provide the opportunity to communicate easily and cheaply with large numbers of recipients.

So - this is the first edition of a regular (probably monthly) newsletter designed to provide information, updates, inspiration, etc to local residents. To be really useful we need to provide compelling content, and grow the subscriber list.

Some news regarding two of the exhibitors from the event at Rode Memorial Hall in September. Unfortunately the Frome Food Hub has discontinued. The concept was great - a single website to buy food and drink from a wide range of local producers, available to pick up in Frome every Wednesday. However, rising food prices and the cost of living crisis had reduced demand for quality local produce, and the operation became unsustainable. You can still buy direct from most of the suppliers, and at various outlets (mostly in Frome). Plus, if you're a fan of good quality, locally-produced food it's worth signing up to the Wallfish Journal. Find out more here:

<https://thewallfishjournal.substack.com>

More positively, in October the Frome Community Bike Project achieved their crowd-funding goal, raising over £30k from around 160 individuals. They are now in the process of setting up a permanent site to recycle old bikes and provide repair facilities to get people cycling!

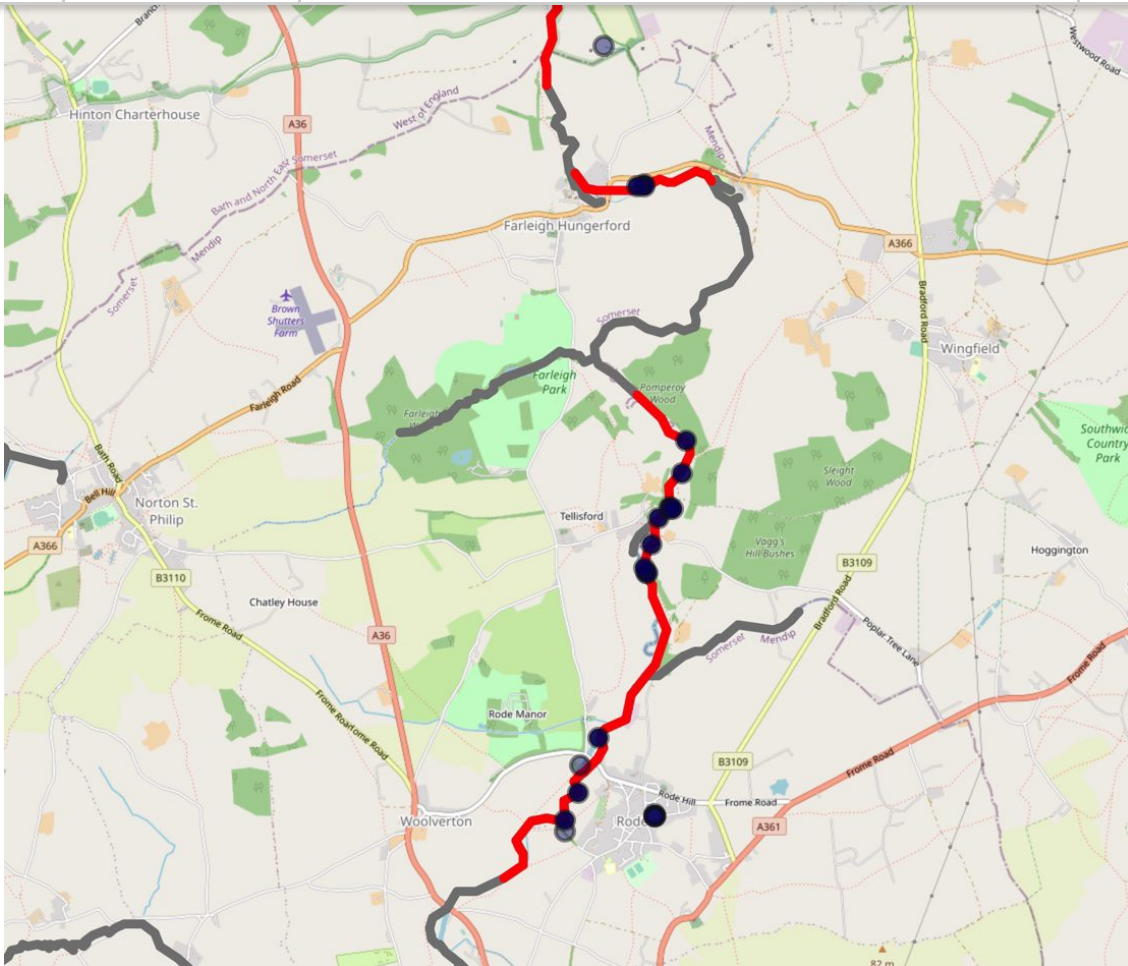
River Frome Water Quality

Bristol Avon Rivers Trust (BART) have recently published the results of the 2022 River Blitz campaign. Analysis of all data collected in 2022 shows that 70% of samples recorded a high level of nitrate (>2mg/L), with low levels of nitrate (<0.5mg/L) recorded in only 6% of samples. Levels greater than 0.5mg/L suggests water quality is likely to impact aquatic wildlife, particularly those sensitive to changes in water quality.

The data collected during all of the Bristol Avon RiverBlitz events since 2016 can be found on their RiverBlitz explorer platform (see link below) which provides tools for users to compare and explore the datasets. This is a great resource for checking out the data for local watercourses - the image below shows the stretch of the River Frome at Rode and just downstream.....the sections coloured red indicate areas of high nutrient pollution, which is bad news for wildlife (and swimmers).

Hopefully we can encourage local residents to get involved in the 2023 RiverBlitz event which will take place in the summer, and work with both Wessex Water and local land-owners to improve the quality of the water in the River Frome.

<https://bristolavonriverstrust.org/riverblitz/>



Community Energy

Rode has in the past looked at the potential for Community Energy, in the form of a local solar farm. And of course there are a number of other local energy projects - including hydro power. To date I don't believe that wind power has been on the list....possibly due to perceived or actual concerns around visual intrusion.

However, a recent episode of BBCR4's "Costing the Earth" focussed on three community energy initiatives, and one of the featured projects provides an opportunity for local residents to access the advantages of wind power without having to construct their own wind turbine.

The concept is simple - you buy a share in a wind farm located elsewhere (in this case, Scotland or Wales). The wind power generated by the farm is purchased by a supply partner (eg: Octopus Energy) and sold to the shareholders at a rate below the market price of electricity. The featured project is operated by Ripple Energy. They already have two wind farms under construction, and you can reserve a spot in the third farm for an initial £25.

The potential savings obviously depend on future energy prices - but there's an opportunity here to support the growth of wind power AND reduce the cost of your own electricity.

It looks an interesting concept - to find out more go to <https://rippleenergy.com>

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Costing the Earth

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Community Energy

New ideas about who owns renewable generation could help us tackle rising energy costs. Tom Heap finds that community energy now comes in many different shapes and sizes.

Transition Streets

As most of you will know, Totnes in Devon was the first "Transition Town" - starting a movement which thousands of communities around the world have followed. At the heart of the success of the movement is a concept called "Transition Streets", which helps people connect with their neighbours, support each other to reduce their living costs and cut their carbon footprint by taking practical action together.

In its first full year the Totnes Transition Streets project involved over **550** households each saving an average of **£570** and reducing their annual carbon footprint by **1.2 tonnes** (that's about the same as taking a small car off the road), although the benefit of the project that past participants talk about the most are the increased connections, friendships and support networks that are created by taking part.

For more information, check out: transitionstreets.org.uk

2023 Climate Emergency Challenge

Unfortunately the article I wrote for the December issue of The Link didn't make it to the final edition....However, I'll tweak it slightly and hopefully it will be included in the February edition. Some elements will also be posted on the Rode Facebook site. Meanwhile you can access the article here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1U8fa1cCulH6ZBkU_ZDuEzWWymqNEE7JF/view?usp=share_link



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